6: Goudal--32-33 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians-1-3
116, 466, 651, 177.46 France
636.46

Laos. -- An Order of 12 May 1914 regulated labour dues for natives and assimilated Asiatics between 18 and 60 years of age who inhabit the territory of Laos.

Registered Laotians are required to provide 16 days' labour per annum, which may be commuted at the rate of 0.40 piastre, while 'Khas' must provide 20 days.

The commutation of labour dues is optional. Labour conscripts may only be recruited within a radius of 100 kilometres from the place of employment or at a maximum of five days' march for the outward and return journeys. No wages are paid for days thus worked, but each day taken up by the journey from the village to the place of work is paid at the rate of 30 cents. At least one-quarter of the labour called up must be employed solely on communal work. The commutation fee is fixed at 0.25 piastre.

An Order of 18 June 1929 increased the commutation fee to 0.30 piastre.

An important Circular issued on 21 June 1934 laid down the measures to be taken by the Residents in Laos to secure that the recruiting and employment of requisitioned labour should be carried out in the best conditions and with due attention to the requirements of health and hygiene.

The recruitment of labour must be carried out with the greatest care and under the supervision and responsibility of the indigenous authorities. Sick and infirm persons, elderly persons and children may not be employed in any circumstances. When the workplace is far from the village, the workers must be carried in service lorries or canoes.

Before work is begun the encampments must be carefully organised. The workers' food must be the object of strict supervision, and every care must be taken to avoid victimisation of the workers by itinerant traders.

As a rule a dresser must be made responsible for the health in all workplaces employing at least 50 workers. The workers must be supplied with tools and implements so as to secure a maximum individual output.

In the management and organisation of workplaces, every effort must be made to co-ordinate administrative supervision, the work of the indigenous authorities and the technical instructions issued by the public works services.

It is thus clear that the regulation of labour dues has undergone practically the same evolution in all the countries of the Union. The old system of compulsory labour, which in theory was subject [33] to no restrictions, has been reduced to a reasonable number of days by the French authorities, while the work exacted from the inhabitants has been

restricted to the district in which the latter live, so as to avoid long absences from home and transfer to distant places. The regulations recommend the avoidance of mass levies likely to empty the villages of their able-bodied population, and discourage the requisitioning of labour during periods of agricultural activity. The introduction of certain measures for the protection of the workers' health (infirmaries in the work-places, etc.), together with the compulsory supply of appropriate tools and implements has certainly introduced a more humane element in the labour system. Finally, the general adoption of commutation fees has led to dues being treated as a tax (in three countries, the dues are included in the personal tax). Only for certain tribes in mountainous districts is the character of the former compulsory labour system still maintained."

6: Goudal--42-43 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians
116, 466, 482, 653, 177.46 France
636.46

"In Laos, the regulation of compulsory labour for public purposes has been the subject of a number of legislative measures, including an Order by the Senior Resident of 27 June 1933 which closely resembles that issued by the Governor-General of 5 February 1932.

Moreover, in the countries of the Union where this form of labour is still permitted, Orders are issued periodically establishing the [43] maximum weight of the load carried by porters and the rates of wages payable to such workers. Annual reports are also sent to the central administrative authorities on the value and usefulness of requisitioned labour. If the present effort made by the authorities is continued, it is practically certain that in the near future compulsory labour levies for transport work and large-scale public works will become a thing of the past."

6: Goudal--122 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians
466

"In Laos, the preventive measures embodied in the above-mentioned Order of 3 June 1922 have been declared applicable by the Order of 13 June 1932."

6: Goudal--161-162 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians-1-2
116, 466, 671, 177.46 France
636.46

"Laos--Sections 197-201 of the Laotian Civil Code provide for two methods of assessing workmen's compensation, according to whether the accident was or was not the consequence of an operation or dangerous work for which no special remuneration was laid down to offset the risk. If the accident is caused by dangerous work, the liability of the employer is regulated as follows: in the case of death or permanent total incapacity, the victim or his dependants are entitled, according to their situation, to an allowance amounting to 100 piastres for officials, 80 piastres for an employee of the administration or a skilled worker exercising a remunerative trade, and 50 piastres for all other workers.

These allowances are reduced to one-half or to one-quarter of the stated amount when the victim's working capacity is reduced, even permanently, by 50 or 25 per cent.

In case of temporary incapacity, the person liable in case of accident is required to pay as damages to the injured party the cost of the treatment entailed and in addition, throughout the whole period of incapacity, full wages in the case of an official, 0.55 piastre a day in the case of an employee of the administration or a skilled worker, and 0.25 piastre a day in the case of all other persons. [162]

All the above-mentioned allowances are reduced by one-half if the injured person is under age and has undertaken the operation or dangerous work with the authorisation of his parents.

Among other classes of work, the Civil Code classifies the following as dangerous: scaling of tall trees, going down wells or underground caves or passages, diving into a deep or rapidly flowing part of a river, the capturing of wild animals, the training of untamed animals, pursuit of criminals, etc.

When, on the other hand, the accident is not the result of dangerous work, but is nevertheless incurred in the course of, or arising out of, paid employment, the employer is required, in case of death or permanent incapacity, to pay to the victim an allowance equal to one-half of the corresponding indemnity established for injuries caused by dangerous work. In case of death he must also pay the cost of burial or cremation.

If the accident results in minor injuries, the employer must provide the injured person with medical attendance and food throughout the period of temporary incapacity.

Finally, in no case is the employer responsible for accidents resulting from unavoidable circumstances."

6: Goudal--166 S-3 (1934) 1938 Laotians
116, 466, 647, 177.46 France
636.46

"In Laos, no local labour inspectorate has so far been established. An Order of 22 December 1932 required the inspector of political and administrative affairs to carry out the duties of local labour inspector in addition to his own work. Subsequently, as the first-class administrator of the civil services who carried out these double duties was not replaced, the chief administrative officer of the Cammon province was entrusted with the duties of labour supervisor for all mining undertakings situated in his area.

It would seem that the cuts in the estimates, which led to a reduction in the staff of the various local inspectorates, have resulted in an unfortunate decline in the activity of these services. (1)

1. We read, for example, in the Annual Report of the Tonking Labour Inspectorate for the period 1 July 1933-30 June 1934: 'The attachment of the labour inspectorate to the Fifth Bureau has resulted in greatly reducing the sphere of activity of the labour inspector, whose time is mainly taken up by his duties as chief of the Bureau of Economic Affairs; his tours of inspection have thus been reduced to those which are strictly necessary'. "